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NOTES

THE Alpha chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa society of the state of Iowa has been organized in the State University of Iowa.

WESTFIELD, N. Y., has received a bequest of \$100,000 from Hannah W. Patterson, of that village, for a free library, which will doubtless be incorporated by the regents at their next meeting.

THE Trustees of the Roxbury Latin School have adopted the Harvard custom of granting their teachers a Sabbatical Year, on half pay. Mr. D. O. S. Lowell is the first to take his turn and he will spend the school year 1896-7 abroad in study. We hope this action of the trustees will be followed by other boards.

HERKIMER, N. Y., has received from Judge Robert Earl and his wife the gift of their residence for a free public library. The library was formally opened January 2, 1896, with public exercises at the Opera House, followed by a reception at the library. The gift, including 3000 volumes, is estimated at not less than \$30,000.

AS STATE after state comes into line in the matter of abolishing, by legislation, the apparently useless form of "three days of grace," the question has been raised in many a mind as to the origin and supposed meaning of a custom which is now dying out in the march of social progress. The editor of *The Sunday School Times* takes up this subject editorially, in his issue of February 15, and shows that the custom dates back not only to early English days, but to the very infancy of the world, and the time of primeval man.

IN answer to the question, "Give arguments for and against the single tax," the following has been received at the regent's office, Albany, N. Y., in an answer paper of the last examination :

"If there should be a single tax it would probably encourage matrimony, but even if all bachelors should become benedicts, even then the demand would not be nearly satisfied, and there are many who would rather pay the tax and retain their freedom. Of course it would be an additional source of income to the country. But there are many who are the only support of large families who cannot marry, and even if they wish to marry could not support their families, and how can the country be prosperous if the people are impoverished."

GENERAL A. W. GREELY, of Arctic fame, begins, in the March *Ladies' Home Journal*, his articles on George Washington, which are expected to create considerable discussion. General Greely has read over 2000 of Wash-

ington's private letters, and he writes in a frank, unbiased way of the personal side of Washington. His first article will deal with the loves and courtships of Washington and his final marriage to the widow Custis. General Greely's articles are not likely to confirm the estimate of those who regard Washington in an ideal way. But they are truthful, and admirably portray the man as he was—in reality.

MESSRS. ALLYN & BACON have recently issued in "The Academy Series of English Classics," *Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar*, edited by Samuel Thurber. Those who know Mr. Thurber's work do not need to be assured that in this little volume he has displayed the same skill as a teacher and the same excellent taste as an editor that have characterized his previous work. He succeeds admirably in making his reader feel that he at any rate knows and loves his author, and this is always the prime requisite for teaching others to know and love him. The presswork of the book is admirable, the paper of good quality, and the price, 20 cents, makes it a marvel of cheapness.

TO THE general public Professor L. H. Butcher, of the University of Edinburgh, is best known as the joint author with Andrew Lang of what is perhaps, all in all, the best prose version of the *Odyssey*. His recent volume, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, affords a new example of his exceptional skill as a translator. It is an outgrowth of the chapters relating to the poetics in an earlier work entitled "Some Aspects of the Greek Genius." The first part of the present volume (pp. 6–105) consists of a translation of the poetics together with a critical text, which is printed on alternate pages with the translation. Following this part of the work in a series of eleven chapters (pp. 107–378) Professor Butcher discusses the main points of Aristotle's æsthetic theory as they must be interpreted in the light of his other works. To those who are acquainted with the wide range of Professor Butcher's scholarship, this work will need no commendation; it appeals equally to the Greek scholar and the student of literature, and for the latter would perform a useful office if it served only to correct some of the popular conceptions of Aristotle's phrases. The book is published by Macmillan & Co., in an exceptionally attractive style. Price \$3.25.

NOT enough teachers fully appreciate the value of the published proceedings of the National Educational Association. Those who attend the meetings are frequently annoyed by the impossibility of hearing all, or even one-fourth of the papers delivered. But could one hear all, it would be only to forget most. With the comfortable knowledge that everything will in due time—sometimes it seems, it is true, an undue time—be published in full, we can at the meeting spend a large part of the time hobnobbing with old friends with a clear conscience. When the report does come out, after many days, for the labor of putting it through the press is tremendous, it makes the best edited and most valuable educational publication of the year,—a model for all sim-

ilar publications, the pride of American schoolmasters. The occasion draws out the best there is in our best men, and the latest best. For the newest thought on all educational topics consult the Proceedings. But to review such a publication is manifestly a very difficult task. Each of many hundreds of papers would have to be reviewed separately. The present volume includes an unusually large number of important papers and discussions: the full report of the Committee of Fifteen on Elementary Schools and the discussions at the Cleveland meeting; and also the papers read on the opening days of the Educational Congress at the Atlanta Exposition. Those who are not members of the N. E. A. may obtain the volume from Secretary Irwin Shepard, Winona, Minn.

THE Third Annual Conference of Teachers of Chemistry met in the Kent Chemical Laboratory, University of Chicago, on December 30 and 31, 1895. The most important feature of the meeting was the report of the committee appointed at the meeting of the conference on December 31, 1894, to formulate the reasons for the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this conference, physics should precede chemistry in the high school curriculum." This report was as follows: "Chemistry is a branch of the study of the relations of matter and energy and should, therefore, be preceded by the more general study of the subject which is undertaken by physics. In chemistry we deal with various forms of matter and a knowledge of the physical properties of gases liquids and solids, acquired before beginning chemical work, is essential in studying their chemical behavior. Transformations of energy accompany all forms of chemical action, and the student should approach the study with a clear understanding of the fundamental law of such transformations as embodied in the doctrine of the conservation of energy. The theory of electrolytic dissociations, without which such subjects as that of double decomposition cannot be understood, presupposes an elementary knowledge of electricity. The phenomena of physics lie nearer to everyday experience than do those of chemistry, and in teaching any subject we should pass from the known to the unknown by as simple and easy stages as is possible. It is true that some topics in physics cannot be understood without a knowledge of chemistry, but it is evident that the converse statement has greater weight in fixing the proper order of studies. The most serious objection which has been raised is the practical one that physics should be placed late in the course in order to secure the proper preparation in mathematics. Two solutions of the problem are possible. Either the instruction in mathematics may be pushed farther back in the course or the time devoted to physics may be divided, and the fuller discussion of topics requiring mathematical treatment given later. In our opinion either course is better than that violent reversal of the order of things which places chemistry before physics. In conclusion we wish to emphasize the fact that physics is as essential a preparation for chemistry as

algebra and geometry are for physics." Mendelejeff's periodic law, its place and its function in an elementary (say one year's course) in chemistry, was also considered. It was the sense of the conference that an elementary treatment of the subject towards the middle or the end of the course is of decided advantage. As to the extent to which physical chemistry should be introduced into a college course in general chemistry, it was the opinion of many present, that the recent theories of solution, the new methods for the determination of molecular weights, and the conception of dissociation in its ordinary sense, as well as by electrolytic and by hydrolytic dissociation, could properly be introduced into such a course. The conference will meet again next year at the same time and place.

NEXT September there will open in Chicago a new school of the first rank, whether we consider its endowment—a million six hundred thousand—its opportunity, the whole west side of that expanded and expanding city, or its plans, comprehensive, wise and in many respects unique. The temptation to make of the Lewis Institute a mere manual training or trade school was strong at the outset, and seemed for a time likely to prevail. But close study of the situation convinced the director, George N. Carman, and those associated with him, that the school had a larger mission. Without abandoning the manual training idea, they have subordinated it to a comprehensive scheme of complete education. The board of trustees is but three in number. They have erected a board of managers, who govern educational affairs. Members of the board are Director Carman, President Harper of the University of Chicago, and Superintendent Albert G. Lane of the Chicago public schools. This recognition of expert educationists, as such, is as unique as it is encouraging. Doubtless the most generally interesting feature of the school is the programme of studies. From advance sheets of the first circular we are able to quote the following: "This outline is in some respects an innovation on school programmes; attention is therefore called to its main characteristics and the considerations that have led to its adoption. It provides for a school day of six hours, from 9 A.M. till 4 P.M., with an intermission of one hour at noon for luncheon and recreation. A student taking full work will have four studies, with a daily exercise in each study. Preparation for two of these daily exercises will be made at home, preparation for the other two, in school under the direction of the teacher for whom preparation is being made; the two studies that are prepared in school one day will be prepared at home next day and *vice versa*. The four lines of study which make up the day's work are of such a distinct character, and require such different methods of preparation, as to prevent monotony, make a healthful variety of work, and lead to the harmonious and symmetrical development of the students. In each study there is a time for teaching, as well as a time for hearing recitations, a time when the teacher by working with his pupils may show them how to work effectively, a time when helping is made more prominent than testing.

This does not mean that the teacher does the work for his students, but rather that he shows them how to do it for themselves. The students meet their teacher in his class room, library, laboratory, or workshop, which is equipped with such appliances, in the way of books, apparatus, and tools, as will enable him to make his teaching most effective, and to furnish his students with whatever they may need for the successful preparation of their lessons. In a word, the laboratory method of teaching is applied to all subjects of study. This method requires that much of the work of the students be done at the school, under the direction of their teachers, and this is the reason why provision is made, in each study, for two hour periods two or three days in the week. What is most distinctive of the laboratory method is that the students work out their problems for themselves, under the guidance of the teacher, who gives such directions as may be necessary, that their manipulations may be skillful, their observations accurate, and their inferences logical. Subsequently the teacher tests the work of his students by determining their ability to give intelligent expression to what they have done, and seen, and reasoned out for themselves. The text-book is but an aid to the teacher in giving direction to the work of the student. The maximum number of students in any class will be twenty-five, so that each student will receive such individual instruction as he needs, and will be tested each day as to the faithfulness with which he has prepared the work assigned." This plan is so novel as to invite close attention to its working. It is a long step toward carrying the principle of laboratory work into all branches of school work.

AN interesting pamphlet is "Student Slang," by Willard C. Gore, of the University of Michigan. The work was done by students of the university as a result of "original investigation," *i. e.*, observation of the slang used by the "other fellows." The definitions are serious philological efforts, *e. g.*, Let her go Gallagher, "an expression signifying readiness to proceed." The editor has entertaining notes on why should this or that expression be regarded as slang? Is this slang local? Transitoriness of slang; slang a sign of intimacy; the standard of slang; and slang constructive and slang destructive. "Much of the older slang," to quote a bit, "was largely due to the need felt by thieves, tramps and vagabonds for a secret language; to them it was obviously a practical need. With us, however, a secret language is no longer a practical need, but rather an æsthetic survival. Some of us like to play with secrecy. This liking is especially characteristic of youth and childhood. Children are very fond of getting off in the corner and telling each other 'secrets,' the substance of which may not be of very much interest, but which imply a high state of intimacy. In much the same way, unfamiliar slang expressions imply a high state of intimacy on the part of those who use them and understand them." It might not be without interest to undertake a study of slang in high schools. The very fact of making such a study would call pupils' attention to the matter, and probably exert a good effect on the propagation of the slang germ.